A conversation on LinkedIn

“Do you want our help in developing research ideas and writing your articles”

Publishing with Integrity

Dear Prof Graham Kendall,

I hope you are doing well.

I came across your profile and was impressed by your research contributions and academic work.

I represent [REDACTED], where we collaborate with researchers, faculty members, and scholars across various disciplines to support research development, publication activities, data analysis, grant proposals, reviewer revisions, and scientific writing projects.

One of our unique approaches is that researchers simply share their research interests or keywords, and our team develops several novel research directions, titles, and abstracts for review. The researcher then selects the most suitable topic, provides feedback, and remains involved throughout the entire development and publication process.

We believe in maintaining academic integrity, research quality, and long-term research collaborations.

I would be delighted to learn more about your current research interests and explore whether there may be opportunities for future collaboration.

Looking forward to connecting with you.

Hi [REDACTED]

I don't normally like being approached with "opportunities" as soon as we connect. I have been "burnt" too many times that I like to get to know the person before looking at ways we could collaborate.

Let me follow your posts for a few days to understand more about what you do as it is not clear to me from your message.

I'll get back to you, if applicable, after looking at your posts.

Thanks again

Dear Prof Graham Kendall,

Thank you for your honest and thoughtful response. I completely understand and respect your approach. Building trust before exploring any kind of collaboration is absolutely the right way to go, and I appreciate you taking the time to share that.

I apologize if my message came across as too forward. That was certainly not my intention. I look forward to connecting with you more genuinely through my posts and our interactions over time.

No rush at all. Whenever you feel comfortable, I am happy to chat.

Best regards,

Could I just ask about the "business model"?

I can't work out if it's one of the following (or perhaps none of these):

1) The author is paid for generating ideas, giving you the abstract etc. and you are a co-author for helping develop the paper.

2) The author pays you for helping them to publish? In this case, who are the author(s)?

3) It is a collaboration, the (original) author comes up with the idea and they, along with you, develop the paper and both parties are a co-author. In this model. no money changes hands.

From your original message, this seems the most likely model as you said that it was a collaboration.

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Dear Professor Graham Kendall,

Thank you for asking for clarity. I am happy to explain our model straightforwardly.

Our service is simple. You provide us with your research topic and any details or direction you have in mind. Our team then develops a complete, high quality, submission ready research paper based on your requirements. You remain the sole author or co author of the paper as per your preference. We do not claim any authorship.

This is a fully paid service. Once we agree on the scope and requirements, we provide a quote and deliver the complete manuscript accordingly.

In short, you bring the topic and we handle everything else, from literature review and methodology to writing, figures, and final formatting, ready for submission to your target journal or conference.

Please feel free to share your topic or research area and we can take it from there.

Best regards,

Thanks for the clarification.

It sounds like you are doing work that would warrant authorship? The author is not acting with integrity if they claim sole authorship, when you have done a lot (the majority) of the work.

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Dear Professor,

Thank you for raising this important point. I fully agree that authorship and contribution recognition are fundamental aspects of research integrity and publication ethics.

To clarify, our objective is to provide research support, technical assistance, and collaborative expertise while ensuring that all participating researchers comply with the authorship and contribution requirements of their respective institutions, funding bodies, and target journals.

We recognize that substantial intellectual contributions to a research project should be appropriately acknowledged and reflected in accordance with established authorship guidelines and ethical standards. Therefore, the specific roles, responsibilities, and contribution levels of all participants should be discussed transparently and agreed upon before initiating any collaborative project.

Our intention is not to circumvent authorship policies, but rather to facilitate collaborative research activities while respecting academic integrity, transparency, and publication ethics. We strongly encourage that all contributors who satisfy the relevant authorship criteria be properly recognized.

I appreciate your thoughtful observation and share your commitment to maintaining high standards of academic and research ethics.

Thank you again for raising this important issue, and I look forward to further academic discussions.

Kind Regards

Thanks for the clarification.

Even if the various parties are co-authors, the fact that one of the author(s) has paid the (some of) the other author(s) for their contribution is unusual.

Would this arrangement be acknowledged on the resulting article, perhaps as a declaration of a conflict of interest?

If you did not become an author would you be comfortable (indeed insist) that the author(s) acknowledge you contribution, even if it was not at a level to be an author?

Yes I am comfortable.

Actually if I provide you an article with all experimentations, you will pay me for that article. Even if you want to add multiple authors it will be up to you.

Thanks [REDACTED]

I will be honest, your business model sounds unethical. At least, that is my view - others may have a different view.

I am going to ask my followers on my "Publishing with Integrity" page (which is associated with this account - you can see it here: https://www.linkedin.com/company/publishing-with-integrity/).

It will be interesting to hear the views of the scholarly community as, as I say, I may be being a little harsh and/or naive.

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Dear Professor,

Thank you for your honesty and for sharing your perspective. I genuinely appreciate your willingness to express your concerns openly.

I fully respect that there are diverse views within the scholarly community regarding research support, consultancy, and collaborative publication models. Questions surrounding authorship, research assistance, editorial support, and professional research services are indeed complex and deserve thoughtful discussion.

My intention has never been to promote or encourage practices that violate academic integrity or publication ethics. Rather, our objective is to provide research support, technical expertise, and collaborative assistance while emphasizing transparency, researcher involvement, and adherence to the policies of institutions, journals, and accepted ethical frameworks.

I understand that some aspects of our model may be viewed differently by different members of the academic community. For this reason, I welcome open discussion and critical evaluation of these practices. Constructive debate is an important part of maintaining and improving standards in scholarly publishing.

If you choose to raise this topic with your "Publishing with Integrity" community, I would appreciate a balanced discussion that considers the broad spectrum of research support services currently available worldwide, including editorial assistance, statistical consulting, language editing, technical support, and collaborative research arrangements. I would also be interested in learning from the perspectives shared by your audience.

Thank you again for engaging in this discussion professionally and respectfully. Regardless of whether we ultimately collaborate, I value the opportunity to exchange views on these important issues affecting the research community.

Of course. I also want a balanced discussion/debate. I plan to report our interaction verbatim and your last comment, I think provides your viewpoint. If you want to add anything further, I invite you to do so and I will also report that verbatim.

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Dear Professor,

Thank you very much for your thoughtful response, your openness, and your willingness to facilitate a balanced and constructive discussion on this important topic.

I genuinely appreciate the opportunity to clarify my perspective further and to contribute to a broader conversation about research support, academic collaboration, and publication ethics.

First and foremost, I would like to emphasize that I have great respect for the principles of academic integrity, transparency, and responsible research conduct. I fully understand that the topics of research assistance, professional support services, authorship, and scholarly contributions are complex and may be viewed differently by researchers, institutions, disciplines, and publishing communities worldwide.

My intention has never been to advocate for or encourage practices that violate publication ethics or undermine the integrity of scholarly research. Rather, my perspective has been that many researchers seek various forms of professional support throughout the research lifecycle, including language editing, statistical consultation, technical implementation, data analysis, methodological guidance, visualization support, and publication assistance.

In my view, the key considerations should always be:

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• Transparency regarding the nature and extent of contributions provided by all parties.

• Compliance with the authorship, acknowledgment, disclosure, and conflict-of-interest policies of the relevant journals, institutions, and professional bodies.

• Appropriate recognition of intellectual and scholarly contributions in accordance with accepted ethical standards.

I fully acknowledge that reasonable scholars may hold different opinions regarding where the boundaries should be drawn between research collaboration, professional consulting, editorial assistance, and scholarly contribution. I believe that these differences in perspective deserve open, respectful, and evidence-based discussion.

I sincerely appreciate your commitment to presenting our exchange accurately and in context. I welcome constructive dialogue and look forward to learning from the views and experiences of the broader scholarly community. Regardless of differing perspectives, I believe that respectful discussion is essential for improving our collective understanding of research integrity and scholarly practice.

Thank you once again for engaging in this conversation with professionalism, openness, and respect.

With best regards.

Thank you - and just to note, I will not reveal your name, or that of your company.

My objective is to generate a discussion, debate and seek views.